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INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State CONFIDENTIAL

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 23860

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1. ACCORDING WEEKEND VERNACULAR PRESS AND APRIL 24 EDITION SAIGON DAILY NEWS, PRIME MINISTER KY TOLD CORRESPONDENTS AT RACH GIA ON APRIL 21 THAT HE HAD STILL NOT DECIDED WHETHER OR NOT TO RUN FOR PRESIDENCY. KY SAID HE WAS NOT COMPETING WITH ANYONE AND "IF MEMBER OF ARMED FORCES COULD MAKE UP HIS MIND TO RUN, HE (KY) WOULD BE VERY GLAD TO RETURN TO MILITARY." KY RE-AFFIRMED THAT THERE WOULD BE ONLY ONE MILITARY CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENCY. HE ADDED THAT HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT RUMOR THAT GENERAL THIEU PLANNED TO RUN FOR UPPER HOUSE.

2. IN REPLY TO QUESTION ABOUT ARTICLE 23 OF CONSTITUTION, KY REPORTEDLY SAID HE SAW NO OBJECTION TO REQUIRING MILITARY OFFICERS AND CIVIL SERVANTS TO RESIGN THEIR POSITIONS BEFORE RUNNING FOR OFFICE. (FROM PRESS ACCOUNTS IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 23860 C O N F I D E N T I A L
KY MEANT THAT IF HE RAN FOR PRESIDENT HE WOULD RESIGN POSITION AS PRIME MINISTER IN ADDITION TO TAKING OFF UNIFORM.)

3. KY ALSO QUOTED AS SAYING VC WILL TRY TO DISRUPT NATIONAL ELECTIONS AND THEY WILL THROW THEIR SUPPORT BEHIND "WEAK" PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE.

4. COMMENT: KY'S REMARKS REPORTED IN PARA 1, WHICH WE PRESUME REFLECT HIS ACTUAL COMMENTS, APPEAR INTENDED TO POINT UP THIEU'S HESITATION PUBLICLY AND TO PUT PRESSURE ON HIM TO MAKE A DECISION. GP-3. LODGE
BT

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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